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AUTHOR Rogers, Donald P.
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ABSTRACT

The simulation of real world problems in an organizational communication classroom by presenting students with case material for analysis, investigation, and discussion has the advantages of being convenient and of allowing students to apply the facts, concepts, and techniques they have learned. This paper contains a variety of cases which provide occasions for observing the many factors involved in group operation, for example, need satisfaction, need frustration, defensiveness, political behavior, economic maneuvering, social interaction, rejection, alienation, pressure, power, and status effects. Five cases are described for each of the three categories of social groups, economic groups, and political groups. (JM)

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CASE STUDIES FOR TEACHING ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATION

Donald P. Rogers
Department of Communication
SUNY at Buffalo

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CS 501 100

What is Simulation?

The most effective, efficient, and reliable learning laboratory is the real world. Unfortunately, the student is not always in a position to take advantage of the learning experiences that an actual confrontation with the situation can provide. When the student can not go to the world, the only substitute is to bring the world to the student.

Simulation is a method of bringing the world to the student. In this situation the student is presented with a case, a description of events that may or may not have taken place (usually there is some kind of a problem), and asked what (s)he would do in this situation. The goal of this approach is to simulate real world problems in a classroom environment by providing the necessary facts and a point of view. The student is not role-playing--not deciding what someone else ought to do in a particular situation. (S)he is deciding what (s)he would do if (s)he were in the situation. The individual remains himself or herself but it is a self in a different environment.

What are the advantages and disadvantages?

The two advantages of simulation should be evident. It is a (1) convenient way of (2) applying the concepts, facts, and techniques that the student has learned. The convenience of this approach lies in its appropriateness to the classroom situation. The instructor can not bring a milling shop, a taxi company, or a school district into class, but can bring a case concerning one of these organizations. The case can introduce the situation and give the student all the facts the student would have if actually there. The fact that (s)he does not have to be 'there' to get the benefit of the experience is the true convenience of the simulation approach.

The application phase of simulation is an advantage borrowed from the

convenience phase. If it were not practical or possible to bring canned situations into the academic environment the student would be hard pressed to find opportunities to exercise newly acquired expertise. The convenience makes the application possible, but the application makes the device worthwhile. The classroom lab gives the student the opportunity to perfect judgment, to view conflict situations, and to make million dollar mistakes with virtual impunity. The variety of problems possible in the case studies is far greater than the student could get in any single industrial setting. A variety of situations to test the comprehension of the student is the prime advantage of simulation.

The prime disadvanatage is the classroom situation. If the student is not held responsible for decisions (beyond the threat of a grade), there will be a very low level of involvement. The classroom situation is artificial; the student is observing objectively and at a distance in time and space a situation which, in the real world, would be physically and emotionally overwhelming. The most important disadvantage is that simulation is simulation. It is the shadow of the real thing not the real thing. However, if this limitation is recognized simulation can be a useful tool being, as it is, the practical application of theory in a laboratory situation.

Introduction to the Cases.

This section does not answer a question; it lays a groundwork for the chapters that follow. The cases presented are intended to provide the student with an opportunity to apply knowledge of interpersonal communication. In all of the cases some aspect of group behavior has contributed to, if not caused, the situation. The cases provide an occasion for observing need satisfaction, need frustration, defensiveness, political behavior, economic manuvering, social interaction, rejection, alienation, pressure, power, status effects, and all the

other factors that are involved in group operation (Well, many of the other factors.).

As the Harvard Graduate School of Business Administration puts on all of its cases, "Case material is prepared as a basis for class discussion. Cases are not designed to pre-illustrations of effective of ineffective handling of administrative problems." The cases presented here do no more. They provide a basis for analysis, investigation, and discussion. They do not provide a right way to handle the situations presented, because, as suggested earlier, there is no one right way. There are many right ways according to the people, the situation, and the problem.

SOCIAL GROUPS

The social group is the first to be discussed because the two-sided need to belong and to be accepted is probably the most basic and pervasive of man's needs. With the exception of the hermit who cuts himself off from mankind, the need for society and reinforcement is universal. In the Shopper's Guide and Economics Building cases the results of not belonging are suggested. In the Soutwest High School case the problem is an overly developed sense of belonging. And in the Sabbatical Leave case the individual belongs, but not to the immediate group. The Copper State Mining Co. case presents a situation in which the existance of a rival group challenges the foundations of belonging. It is a case of conflicting group memberships.

1. Shopper's Guide Magazine

The Shopper's Guide Magazine Company was a small publisher putting out a weekly advertising circular. The company depended on the large food chains in its circulation area for sufficient advertising to stay in business. There were

other small sources of income, but none of these were significant. The magazine's headquarters were located in a vacated supermarket building. There were two enclosed offices for the publisher and the sales manager in the back of the building and a large work room for the rest of the staff in the front.

The rest of the staff were eleven women having various duties. Nine of the women had worked for the magazine at least four years, one was brand new, and one, Lucy Thompson, had been there about eight months. The nine older staff members were a closely knit group. Most of them were married to men who worked in a nearby tool and die plant. They ate lunch as a group daily often interchanging food, or sampling a new recipe found by one of the members. Lucy Thompson was just out of college. This was her first job and she needed the money to pay off the debts she had accumulated while going to school. The other girl was a typist who came in in the late afternoons to catch up on correspondance and answer the telephone.

The department group had a tradition of frequent parties for birthdays and aniversaries. These parties usually meant that someone would take up a collection for the gift. Lucy never contributed to these gifts nor did she attend the parties. She felt that she could not afford the dollar or so that was collected each week. The rest of the women simply assumed that she did not have the money to contribute.

At the end of her seventh month with the magazine the publisher gave Lucy a raise in salary which he publicly announced to the group. The other women congratulated Lucy this occasion. But when the next collection came around Lucy still did not contribute. The other women decided that she was being snooty and acting like she was better than them. They began playing pranks on her such as giving her typing erasers that smeared and pens that leaked. When Lucy still

would not contribute the pranks were escalated. One of the women spilled hot coffee on her, another changed a price in one of the ads Lucy was designing.

When the ad ran with the altered price the food chain affected was severly compromised. The price was well below their usual selling price and honoring it meant a large loss while failing to honor it meant customer dissatisfaction. The local manager of the chain told the publisher after the incident that if anything like that ever happened again it would mean the end of their association, The publisher can not afford to lose the chain's advertising.

2. The Economics Building

The Economics Building was a small structure on the edge of a large campus. There were no other buildings near it, only practice fields and parking lots. The building housed the offices and faculty members of the Economics Department of the university. There were offices for six faculty members, the head of the department, a secretary, and two classrooms in the building. There was one janitor assigned to take care of the building.

The janitor was assigned to the building on a full time basis because the Director of Maintenance believed that too much time would be wasted if the janitor had to walk from the Economics Building to any other building on campus. The janitor worked an afternoon shift because there had been numerous complaints that there was no one to talk to on the night shift. The afternoon shift had been adopted two years earlier to reduce complaints and turnover by putting the janitor in the building when others are there.

There were as many complaints after the change as there were before. "There's too much work." "The students are messy." "The faculty doesn't appreciate the job I do." And there have been five different janitors in the two years since the change.

3. Southwest High School

Southwest High School was a small (fifteen hundred students) regional school fed by seven junior high schools. It offered four programs for its students: advanced college prep, college prep, standard, and vocational. The student was placed in one of these programs as a freshman on the basis of tests, recommendations, and intentions. The student was very seldom allowed to change from one program to another and within each program there was a closely prescribed schedule of classes that the student was to take. The result of this structure was that groups of students ended up taking virtually every class together.

One such group of students had gone through grade school and junior high together. They were already a highly cohesive group when they started at the high school. They all came from the same part of town, from the same social status (business and professional), and the same alphabetic group (all but one had last names starting with r, s, or t). All were far above average intellectually.

Because of their similarities they were put in the advanced college prep program together. This gave them more opportunities to interact on class projects, homework, and the like. The group spent a lot of their free time together and if one became involved in an activity all were involved. The group became known as a very powerful clique in the school. They were strong and active in student affairs and the jealously guarded their status as leaders and pace setters in the school.

The presence of this group in a classroom hampered effective teaching. A criticism, comment or suggestion made to one member of the group was accepted or challenged as if it had been made to the entire group. If one of the group was put on the spot the others came immediately to the defense. The group was

unwilling to admit that one of their members could be wrong; any guilt, or praise, due to one member of the group was diffused over the whole group.

Teachers attempting to give individual attention to one member of the group were beset or attacked (according to the type of attention) by the rest of the group. A great deal of class time was spent dealing with the members of the group and other students started to complain. One instructor who attempted to ignor the group came under such verbal abuse that he resigned, another refused to teach the group, and another left the school because she was close to a nervous breakdown.

4. The Sabbatical Leave

After several years teaching at a large state university, a distinguished Professor of Business Administration requested and was granted sabbatical leave. He made inquiries and found a visiting professorship at a small, private, New England college that appeared to be a fine position for filling the leave. With some preliminary negotiations he accepted the post.

The department of the small school was a big change from what the Professor had been used to. At the state university he had been pretty much autonomous. He dressed as he pleased, taught what he wanted, and kept office hours as he liked. At the small college the atmosphere was just the opposite. There was a strict suit-and-tie dress code among senior faculty members, a tightly preplanned syllabus for all courses (which was periodically spot checked), and prescribed times for him to be in his office. The Professor was not happy with these conditions and since they were departmental customs only, he ignored them. He rationalized that, "I'm only going to be here one year. I'm not a permanent member of the department, so why should I act like one." The Professor continued

to dress as he pleased, teach what he wanted, and keep office hours as he liked.

None of the Professor's actions ran contrary to school policy or violated his contract with the college. He was, however, violating department norms. The members of the department would probably have felt that they could afford to put up with his idiosyncrasisms since he was only going to be there for a year. But many of the younger members of the faculty began imitating the Professor. They no longer followed the dress code, the syllabus, or the prescribed office hours. Excluding the Professor there were five in the group that began exercising their new found freedoms.

The older faculty members, seven in all, were upset by this change. They felt that the liberties these professors were taking would harm the intellectual status of Business Administration in the college. The older members of the faculty met informally on a number of occasions to decide what they should do about the situation, but they came to no conclusions.

5. Copper State Mining Co.

The Copper State Mining Company operated a number of open pit copper mines throughout the world. One of its largest mines was in San Manuel, Arizona. The successful operation of an open pit mine required a great deal of capital outlay in terms large-scale and complex equipment. Even the trucks used to haul waste ore were several tons oversized. The necessity for relying on this specialized type of equipment meant that the company had to train all of its employees specially. The training period ran for two years on most jobs and the worker served as kind of an apprentice during that time. After the training period was completed the worker took his place in the pit or one of the service divisions. The repayment time for the company's investment was a minimum of four years (two years beyond training).

The company hired most of its employees from two sources: American citizens of Mexican decent and Mexican citizens in the United States on three-year work visas. All of the first line foremen and many of the unit supervisors were bi-lingual Mexican Americans. The American citizens, by-and-large, were not newcomers. Most of them were from families that had lived in Arizona for several generations. Most of them had gone to American schools and many had served in the American Army or Marine Corps. The Americans may have been of Mexican ancestory and may have spoken the Mexican language, but they did not think of themselves as Mexicans. They were Americans and, in fact, they looked down on the Mexican citizens as ignorant peons.

The Mexican citizens were as much Mexican as their counterparts were American. Many of them had crossed the border only because they were unable to find employment in Mexico. Mexico, however, remained their home; that was where their families and friends were, where they had grown up, and where they wanted to die. The Mexicans could not understand why the Americans were willing to stay in the United States. Many of the Mexicans felt that the Americans were some kind of a scum having given up their birthright.

The two groups associated very little in their social lives--the few occasions when they came together often ended in fights. On the job, however, they were inevitably thrown together because the Americans with the most skill (they had been there longest) and usually the most status were given the job of training the newly arrived Mexicans. The interdependent nature of much of the work also forced the two groups together even after the training period.

The net result of the interaction and the friction that resulted was a high turnover rate among the Mexican citizens who simply did not renew their visas. This high turnover was costly because it usually happened before the return on

training had been made.

ECONOMIC GROUPS

The economic group is particularly significant in the work situation, because most people take and hold jobs in response to an economic motive. In the Sullivan Lumber case the individuals have found different ways of furthering their self-interests. In the Motor Pool and CCM Encyclopedia Sales cases the problem is how to protect the economic security that the person built up. The American Applicance Company and State Employment Service cases indicate the type of problems that can result when economic goals are in conflict.

1. Sullivan Lumber

Sullivan Lumber was a large wholesale builder's supply company. Although they worked under contract, the company was known and respected for its ability to fill small lumber orders quickly and completely. Much of the business that the company got was because of its reputation for quality materials and quick delivery. In a contract industry where men were paid whether they worked or not a supplier that could fill rush orders stood to gain a lot of business.

In the past Sullivan Lumber had been the only company in the area supplying this service, but recently two competitors had come into being. And there had been a lot of complaints in the last few months about late deliveries or the wrong materials. Paul Daily, Sullivan's yard manager, had isolated the problem to the two work groups that had the job of stocking the lumber bins.

The one group, led by Michael Obranski (a huge Polish immigrant), was made up primarily of ex-farm workers and new arrivals in the United States from sourthern and eastern Europe. The group was interested in making money, as much and as fast as possible. The company had two informal incentive plans that

allowed them to do just that. The one plan was that if the group finished work early on a given day and there was work to be done in the roof truss or door manufacturing sections, the bin workers could do it and get piece-work pay for these jobs plus regular pay for their bin jobs. The second incentive was that if the group could unload the freight cars bringing in cut lumber in less than twenty-four hours, the company would split the car rental savings with the group. By fully taking advantage of these two opportunities, the group members managed to keep their incomes fairly high. However, in order to get their regular work done quickly the group often did it haphazardly. Lumber was missized or placed in the wrong bins. The result was the wrong size or grade lumber being delivered (the deliverymen do not know lumber.).

The other group, led by John Carter (a sixteen year veteran with the company), was made up of older men who had been with the company for some years. Their prime concern was keeping their jobs and protecting their incomes. They were less concerned with the incentive plans than with the seniority clauses of their union agreement. The finishing bins which these men stocked required close care because the lumber was frequently finished and the surfaces could be easily damaged. The group gave a lot of effort to treating the lumber carefully. They gave their lumber extra care by handling it slowly and delicately. They were not goofing off; they were trying to keep their jobs by doing them extremely well. The result of these extra efforts, however, was that materials were not always in the bins when needed. They had to be unloaded specially and quickly, often with some damage to them. The drivers were delayed and the materials were delivered behind schedules. A whole week's deliveries could be thrown off this way.

Daily had already tried interchanging members of the groups, but the result had been slower deliveries of the wrong materials and more damages, all the bad points of both groups.

2. The Motor Pool

Master Sargeant Frank Willets had been chief N.C.O. of the base motor pool for almost three years. He was an excellent mechanic, a good sargeant, and a superior backscratcher. Willets could fix any vehicle the Army had, and he could fix anybody the Army had as well. Willets knew how to trade favors. The M.P.'s got their trucks back quickly and they turned their heads when Willets worked in the shop at night. The Supply Sargeant got to pick up his wife in the general's car and Willets got his requisitions processed overnight. The Captain got an extra large mileage reading to make up for his overspending and Willets' unit got an extra three days furlough at Christmas time. Willets had built a very efficient and secure operation on his ability to horse-trade. That efficiency had led to several very quick promotions and a comforting E-8 rating and pay.

Now there was a problem. The new Lieutenant was straight out of school and going by the book. Willets knew that he could not keep his operation hidden from the Lieutenant, but he did not know how to explain it to him.

3. RRA Encyclopedia Sales, Inc.

RRA was the sales division of a major encyclopedia publisher. The division had just undergone a major reorganization and a number of the top salesmen had received new territories. Most of the territories were in the western part of the United States and most of the salesmen were in the eastern part. Many of the salesmen gave up comfortable positions to take the promotions.

When the salesmen started working their new territories they began discovering that the techniques which had worked well in the east (Ohio) did not work at all in the west (Nevada). The salesmen learned that people would not let them in at the door and if they set the appointment in advance, as often as not the people were not home when they came. The old door openers (a free gift, trading

stamps, a friend's name) no longer worked. The pressure tactics led to no signed contracts and people just would not listen after nine o'clock at night.

The few successful salesmen were the ones who made their calls in the late afternoon, who set up their appointments through personal contact, who were light in their manner, casual in their appearance, soft in their sell, and friendly in their tone. RRA's sales manager realized that a new approach was necessary for most of his salesmen. Many of them were suffering financially and threatening to quit. But many were also convinced that they just were not working hard enough, after all these sales techniques had worked before. There was no reason why they should not work now. There was no reason for a change of tactics, especially to something the salesmen were not familiar with.

4. American Appliance Co.

The American Appliance Co. was a high volume distribution center servicing furniture and appliance companies in eight states. The firm owed its size entirely to the fact that firms big enough to compete with it preferred the high mark-up and low inventory costs of retail sales. The company was profitable because there was no competition. There was not enough business available to support another company even half its size. The only thing that kept competition out of the market was that those who could compete knew that it was easier to rely on American than go to the effort of setting up their own warehouse facilities.

The traffic department at American operated on the theory that a customer who gets his order quickly will be a happy customer. The department had quick delivery as its prime goal, and that goal was not lost on the truck drivers. Their most frequently used phrase sums up their attitude, "Com'on, le's get the h--l out of this f---ing place." The truck drivers were responsible for the loading

of their trucks and in their eagerness to get out quickly, they took the appliances from where-ever they found them. Since the appliances to be delivered had particular inventory locations, the truck drivers' habit of ignoring the locations played havoc with inventory control. The truck drivers defended their actions by arguing that they had to get the merchandise delivered and the goods they needed were never in the locations given anyway.

The inventory department operated on the theory that as little money as possible ought to be tied up in inventory. That meant keeping close tabs on the inventory to make sure that only the minimum amount was on hand for the current operating period. Needless to say, traffic and inventory were involved in a perpetual debate. Does the company hold down costs and so, increase complaints and the possibility of competition? Or do they keep the customers happy by letting the costs go up and the profit margin go down?

5. The State Employment Service

The State Employment Service acts as a clearing house for short term, part time, unskilled, and semi-skilled jobs. They take requests from employers and try to match people up with the job description and requirements. Most of the jobs they have to fill are from employers needing people for heavy physical labor on a regular basis. Most of the people they have are college students looking for part time and summer work.

In the past when the Service has tried to match these two groups the results have been unhappy for both. The employers complained that the students lacked the capacity for hard work. "Them college guys may be smart, but when it comes to workin' they ain't fer s--t." The college students, for their part, complained that the employers treated them poorly. "He talked like I had the mentality of a retarded raccoon." The result was that many of the college students were fired

after only a few days on the job and many more quit as soon as they thought they had an opportunity for a better job.

After a while employers requesting workers stipulated, "No college." The college students, by the same logic, refused to work for certain kinds of employers. So the Employment Service had a lot of students needing jobs and a lot of employers needing workers, but the two would not get together.

POLITICAL GROUPS

Power is a significant motivating factor for human behavior. Most people need to feel that they have some element of control over their environments. The Grover Glove Co. and Mayers' Pharmaceuticals cases indicate attempts to increase that control. The Metro Hospital and Ace Vacuum Cleaners cases demonstrate what can happen when that control is threatened. In the Landon Press case there is an indiction of what can happen when an attempt to use political pressure backfires.

1. Grover Glove Co.

Grover Glove Company was a small manufacturing subsidy of a large clothing firm. Their products were work gloves, mittens, dress gloves, and other types of cloth handwear. The company had undergone a number of management turnovers and on several occasions had nearly closed. The current management group had been in for about eleven months. They were just beginning to get the company on its feet, but the situation was a best marginal. One of the company's most serious problems was its poor union/management relations. The union had been understandably upset by the frequent management turnovers and the reorganizing and restructuring of jobs that had gone with the turnovers. The union actively opposed any changes which they believed might compromise their position relative to management.

Included in the management group that had come in eleven months earlier was Dave Bradshaw, the Director of Industrial Engineering, and his administrative assistant Steve Devin. Bradshaw's job was to see to it that the plant ran smoothly. In practice, he concerned himself only with the technical problems of his job and left most of the administrative work and non-technical decisions to Devin. This arrangement suited Devin just fine.

Devin was just out of college, very anxious to set the world afire, and very conscious of the power that Bradshaw had given him. The only real limitation that Bradshaw had put on Devin's use of power to get his job done was to, "Tell me before you make any important decision." He did not follow this order.

Devin set about his first task of putting the plant's paper work in order. He reorganized the filing system and altered the billing and credit procedures. These changes greatly increased the plant's efficiency by making necessary information more readily accessible. Devin received a company citation for these actions (but no more authority). Flushed with success, Devin set about developing an improved work flow in the plant. The key to his plans was a redirection of deliveries. Instead of two doors through which raw materials would come there would be only one. This plan eliminated the necessity for a second receiving dock and a second dock manager. As Devin had done before, he set about impliment-ing his plan by assuming the authority to change functions and he transferred the number two dock manager to a different part of the plant.

The dock manager, who was a union steward, objected to the transfer and took it to the union which agreed to strike unless he was restored to his former position. In the meantime, Bradshaw had followed Devin's lead and run a new process line across the number two dock at a great deal of expense to the company.

A strike would certainly fold the company, but eliminating the new process

line might do it as well.

2. Chicago Pharmaceuticals

The Chicago Company was a large patent-drug operation. The company developed, tested, and marketed a wide variety of shelf medications and pharmacists' supplies. The Chicago products had been on the market more than eighty years and the company was firmly established in the industry. The balance sheet looked good, the stock was selling high, and Hank Statler, the head of Research and Development, had a problem.

The R & D department was divided into four sections: non-prescription medicines, druggists' supplies, basic research, and field testing. Statler's problem was with the basic research group; unless he went personally to the labs he heard nothing about their progress. The only time they initiated any serious communication with Statler was when they had developed and finished testing a new product. Telephone communication from Statler's point of view was useless, "All they say is, 'Everything's fine'." Statler knew that the group must have difficulties, but he did not know what they were.

The basic research team was made up of fifteen chemists (most with Ph.D.'s) and four lab technicians. The group was housed in a small lab building some distance from the headquarters building where Statler and the other labs were located. because of the distance and the work the group had been left pretty much alone. Statler did not want to change the situation he just wanted to know what was going on.

3. Metro Hospital

Metro was a large receiving hospital. Although it was privately endowed, it operated as a part of the municipal hospital system of the city in which it was located. The prime difference between Metro and the city hospitals was that unions were quite active at Metro and no place else in city. Metro had two

particularly active unions, one among the registered nurses the other was among the practical nurses.

The registered nurses were college graduates and they filled most of the high paying and high status hospital jobs. They were the operation room nurses, the doctors' aides, and the administrators. The practical nurses were hospital trained (most of them had a two-year course) and took most of the 'dirty' jobs. They were the ward nurses, the emergency room staff, and the receptionists. They were also unhappy about the better treatment that the registered nurses received. Some of the jobs (dietician, director of nursing services, etc.) required a college education, but these were in the minority. Most of the jobs could be done by any nurse.

The practical nurses' union had decided that they would strike if they were not given an equal pay schedule and the same opportunities for advancement (status jobs) that the registered nurses had. The Director of Personnel at the hospital was trying to determine how to deal with the situation when a delegation of the registered nurses came in. They made the point of their visit very clear. If the hospital was so unprofessional as to treat the practical nurses as equals in training to the registered nurses, then the registered nurses would strike in protest.

4. Ace Vacuum Cleaners

The Ace Vacuum Cleaner company was a sales organization specializing in door-to-door sales. The Los Angeles office was headed by George Morton, a self-made man who had dropped out of high school in his second year and had made a successful career out of vacuum sales. Morton had been with Ace for twelve years and though he had been offered promotions before, this was the first one he had accepted.

The Los Angeles office was a ball-of-fire. They led the company in sales five or six months out of the year and Morton was really looking forward to joining this group of high efficiency salesmen. Morton knew only one of the salesmen before he moved into the office, but he did know that the group was mostly part-time college students.

When Morton moved into the office, he found the atmosphere very different from the ones he was familiar with. In the offices where he had worked before the successful managers were those who ran a tight unit; keeping close watch on performance, assigning territories, and setting appointments for his men. Here, however, the men would take time off for vacations or exams. They worked whatever part of the city they wished to and frequently they ignored appointments set by Morton.

Despite the fact that sales remained high, Morton was worried. "Control them! H--l, I don't know how to talk to them."

5. Landon Press

Tom (Mule) Landon ran his special order printing house very orderly and exactly the way he wanted things done. The business was about medium size. They had a few large commercial contracts, but a lot of their 'gravy' jobs just walked in off the streets. Landon, despite his nickname, left the press rooms pretty much alone. He knew presses and he knew that each press has its own unique characteristics. What worked for one press might destroy another one.

Outside the press rooms Landon lived up to his nickname. He was stubborn as a mule; seldom compromising and never giving in on anything. Landon had been a print master for several years before opening his own shop. He had built the business up through that knowledge and lots of hard work. He was fond of saying, "What I got, I earned. Nobody every gave me anything." The easiest way to start

a fight with Landon was to tell him to do something.

The NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People) in Landon's town was very active and quite militant. They were actively engaged in a project to increase the number of jobs available to the black community. One of their demands to employers was that the number of blacks employed be proportional to the number in the community. The NAACP presented this demand to Landon very powerfully, thinking that they were going to have to overwhelm him. To their surprise he accepted the ultimatum calmly asking only how many blacks he ought to be employing. The NAACP representatives told him, and he said that he would comply as soon as possible. Then he led the men from the NAACP downstairs to his press rooms, called together his black employees, and announced that he was firing half of them because the NAACP said there was a number that he should employ. The fired employees blamed the NAACP for losing them jobs. The employees who remained became very anxious lest they be out of work as well. The NAACP was thoroughly roasted by the newspapers, working class blacks, and the more militant members of the black community. Landon was very proud of himself, but said that if the NAACP formally requested it, he would take the fired workers back. Those fired want the NAACP to make the request, but other members of the community feel that the NAACP should not demean itself by doing so.